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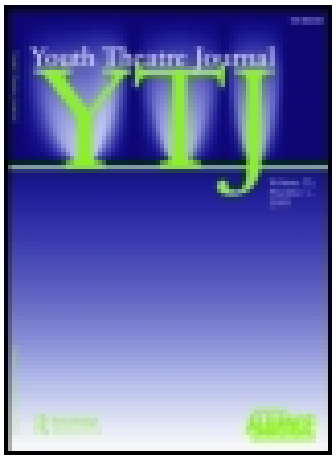

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"What is Cinderella Hiding? Theatre and Drama/Ideology/Young People"

Roger L. Bedard [a]
[a] Symposium Director

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"What is Cinderella Hiding? Theatre and Drama/Ideology/ Young People"

A Research Symposium sponsored by
Theatre for Youth Program, Arizona State University
February 20–23, 2003

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SYMPOSIUM OVERVIEW

This symposium[1] represents the first in what we hope will become a series of research symposia, convened in honor of Jonathan Levy and the "Jonathan Levy Collection" of the Child Drama Collection in ASU's Hayden Library.

We created this symposium to facilitate focused dialogue on issues related to ideology and theatre with and for young people; and, we hope, to initiate an ongoing discourse on the subject in the wider theatre for youth field. We saw the need for this symposium in the irony that most people dismiss theatre and drama with and for young people as "kid's stuff." Beyond objections to explicit sexual or violent images or language, commentators—whether from a scholarly or a lay perspective—generally give little consideration to the ideological constructs and ramifications of drama with and for young people. This is compounded by the fact that most research in the field is focused on practice—to refine methodology.

We solicited papers from scholars from within and from "outside" the field on the symposium topic. We then issued an open invitation to others to participate in dialogue surrounding these papers. We limited total symposium participation to 50 (including presenters), so that the symposium could follow a single track of discourse, with all participants involved in each strand. Papers were posted online prior to the symposium, and all participants were asked to read the papers prior to the symposium so that maximum time could be allotted to discussion rather than to paper presentation. The two-day discussion was organized around topics suggested by the papers.

SYMPOSIUM ORGANIZATION

Following you will find several documents related to the symposium. These include some of the scholarly papers presented, two examples of what I call "personal position" papers—each of which were useful in illustrating aspects of ideology and generating discussion—and a response to the symposium from an "outside eye."

The symposium began with an "argument" submitted by James Kincaid, entitled "What's a Young Audience?" This, coupled with Jonathan Levy's research question, "How does theatre teach?" provided a rich context from which to begin our exploration of ideology, theatre, and young people. These were followed by

discussions centered on papers submitted by Laura McCammon, Philip Taylor, Sharon Grady, Roger Bedard, Manon van de Water, Megan Alrutz, Jennifer Chapman, and Lori Hager. We concluded these wide-ranging discussions with consideration of ethical issues of ideology, as articulated from a personal perspective by Stephani Woodson, in her reflective narrative: "A Meditation on Ideology, Truth, and Personal Ethics." The symposium concluded with a presentation by Margaret Knapp, offering her perspectives as an "outside eye" reporter.

Following are some of the papers and documents from the symposium. Complete texts of all papers presented can be found at: http://theatre.asu.edu/symposium/index.html.

Roger L. Bedard, Symposium Director

NOTES

[1] The symposium was supported by ASU Graduate College, ASU Herberger College of Fine Arts, Children's Theatre Foundation of America, ASU Department of Theatre, and ASU Libraries.

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